

Notice of Preparation

Notice of Preparation

To: Responsible & Trustee Agencies From: California Department of Transportation,
District 8, Division of Environmental Planning
464 W. 4th Street, MS-820
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(Address) (Address)

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Caltrans District 8 will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of an Initial Study (is is not) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Antonia Toledo, Senior Environmental Planner, MS 820 at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Project Title: Interstate 215/Keller Road New Interchange Project

Project Applicant, if any: City of Murrieta

Date: 9/14/22 Signature: *Gabrielle Duff* for AT
Title: Senior Environmental Planner
Telephone: (909) 501-5741

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, and 15375.

Project Description:

The City of Murrieta (City), in cooperation with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 8, County of Riverside (County), and the City of Menifee, proposes a new full interchange and auxiliary lanes at Interstate 215 (I-215) and Keller Road in Riverside County.

The project also includes widening and/or striping along Keller Road between Zeiders Road to the West and to Whitewood/Menifee Road to the East.

The project's primary improvements consist of the following:

- Construction Northbound (NB) and Southbound (SB) on and off-ramps for accessing I-215 from the existing Keller Road undercrossing.
- Construct auxiliary lanes in the NB and SB direction of I-215, from the Scott Road Interchange (IC) to the proposed Keller Road IC.
- Remove Antelope Road from Brians Way to Mapleton Avenue and circulate traffic onto an improved Brians Way and Warner Place. North (N) of Keller Road, Antelope Road is realigned to join Mapleton Avenue.
- Remove Scenic View Drive on the West side of the future IC, due to a conflict with the SB onramp. Scenic View Drive will not be replaced.

Location of Study Area:

The Keller Road Interchange would be located 1.5 miles North of the Clinton Keith Road overcrossing and 1.0 miles South of the Scott Road overcrossing (see Figure 1).

Along Keller Road, the project limits are from Zeiders Road to Whitewood Road. Along I-215, the project limits are from North of Clinton Keith Interchange to South of Scott Road Interchange.

Project Alternatives:

A total of five alternatives were considered early in the project study. One out of the five alternatives, Alternative 4 (Modified Partial Cloverleaf Interchange), was determined to not be viable and was eliminated from further evaluation. Four alternatives were retained for additional study as part of this current environmental effort. Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 5 are described in further detail below.

Alternative 1 – No-Build

The No-Build Alternative assumes that no improvements will be made to the freeway mainline or to the existing I-215/Keller Road interchange. The existing conditions are two parallel bridges constructed in 1979 over Keller Road that carry Northbound and Southbound traffic for I-215. Without the planned improvements proposed as part of the project, the forecasted increased traffic demand would worsen over time resulting in increased congestion and decreased mainline freeway operations.

Alternative 2 – Spread Diamond Interchange

Alternative 2 proposes to reconstruct the I-215/Keller Road interchange in a spread diamond configuration (see Figure 2). Improvements under Alternative 2 include the construction of new Southbound on/off-ramps and Northbound on/off-ramps to and from the I-215 mainline, in a spread diamond configuration. Additionally, Alternative 2 proposes a Northbound auxiliary lane from Keller Road Northbound on-ramp to Scott Road Northbound off-ramp, a Southbound auxiliary lane from Scott Road Southbound on-ramp to Keller Road Southbound off-ramp, and a Southbound auxiliary lane from Keller Road Southbound on-ramp. Other improvements as part of Alternative 2 include the installation of signals at both the proposed Southbound and Northbound ramp intersections.

Alternative 3 – Partial Cloverleaf Interchange

Alternative 3 proposes to reconstruct the I-215/Keller Road interchange in a partial cloverleaf configuration (see Figure 3). Improvements under Alternative 3 include the construction of new Southbound on/off-ramps to and from the I-215 mainline, including a Southbound loop on-ramp at Northwest quadrant. Alternative 3 also includes the construction of new Northbound on/off-ramps to and from the I-215 mainline, including a Northbound loop on-ramp at Northwest quadrant. Additionally, Alternative 3 proposes a Northbound auxiliary lane from Keller Road Northbound on-ramp to Scott Road Northbound off-ramp, a Southbound auxiliary lane from Scott Road Southbound on-ramp to Keller Road Southbound off-ramp, and a Southbound auxiliary lane from Keller Road Southbound on-ramp. Other improvements as part of Alternative 3 include the widening of the existing I-215/Keller Road undercrossing to accommodate proposed loop on-ramps, as well as the installation of signals at both the proposed Southbound and Northbound ramp intersections.

Alternative 5 – Compact Diamond

Alternative 5 proposes to reconstruct the I-215/Keller Road interchange in a compact diamond configuration (see Figure 4). Improvements under Alternative 5 include the construction of new Southbound and Northbound on/off-ramps at Keller Road in a double roundabout configuration. Additionally, Alternative 5 proposes a Northbound auxiliary lane from Keller Road Northbound on-ramp to Scott Road Northbound off-ramp, and a Southbound auxiliary lane from Scott Road Southbound on-ramp to Keller Road Southbound off-ramp. Another improvement as part of Alternative 5 include the widening of the existing I-215/Keller Road undercrossing to accommodate proposed loop off-ramps.

Potential Environmental Effects:

Various environmental and community resources are known to exist within the limits of the study area and the potential effects to these resources will be studied in the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA). Environmental effects anticipated for study include, but are not limited to: Aesthetic/Visual, Air Quality, Archaeological/Historical, Biological Resources, Drainage/Absorption, Economic/Jobs, Flood Plain/Flooding, Forest Land/Fire Hazard, Geologic/Seismic, Noise, Population/Housing Balance, Public Services/Facilities, Recreation/Parks, Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading, Toxic/Hazardous, Traffic/Circulation, Vegetation, Water Quality, Water Supply/Groundwater, Growth Inducement, Land Use, Cumulative Effects, Energy, and Greenhouse Gases (GHG). Of these environmental resources, further study may determine potentially significant impacts to climate change due to new State policy regarding Greenhouse Gases (GHG). It is anticipated that the project will have a less than significant impact on all other environmental resources.

Public Scoping Meeting:

The public scoping period is one of the first steps in the environmental process. It is also one of the most important steps as it allows the public to weigh in on the direction for the required environmental studies and on the conceptual purpose and need statement which will be used to determine effectiveness of alternatives. The public scoping meeting will take place virtually on 10/19/2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Figure 1: Project Location

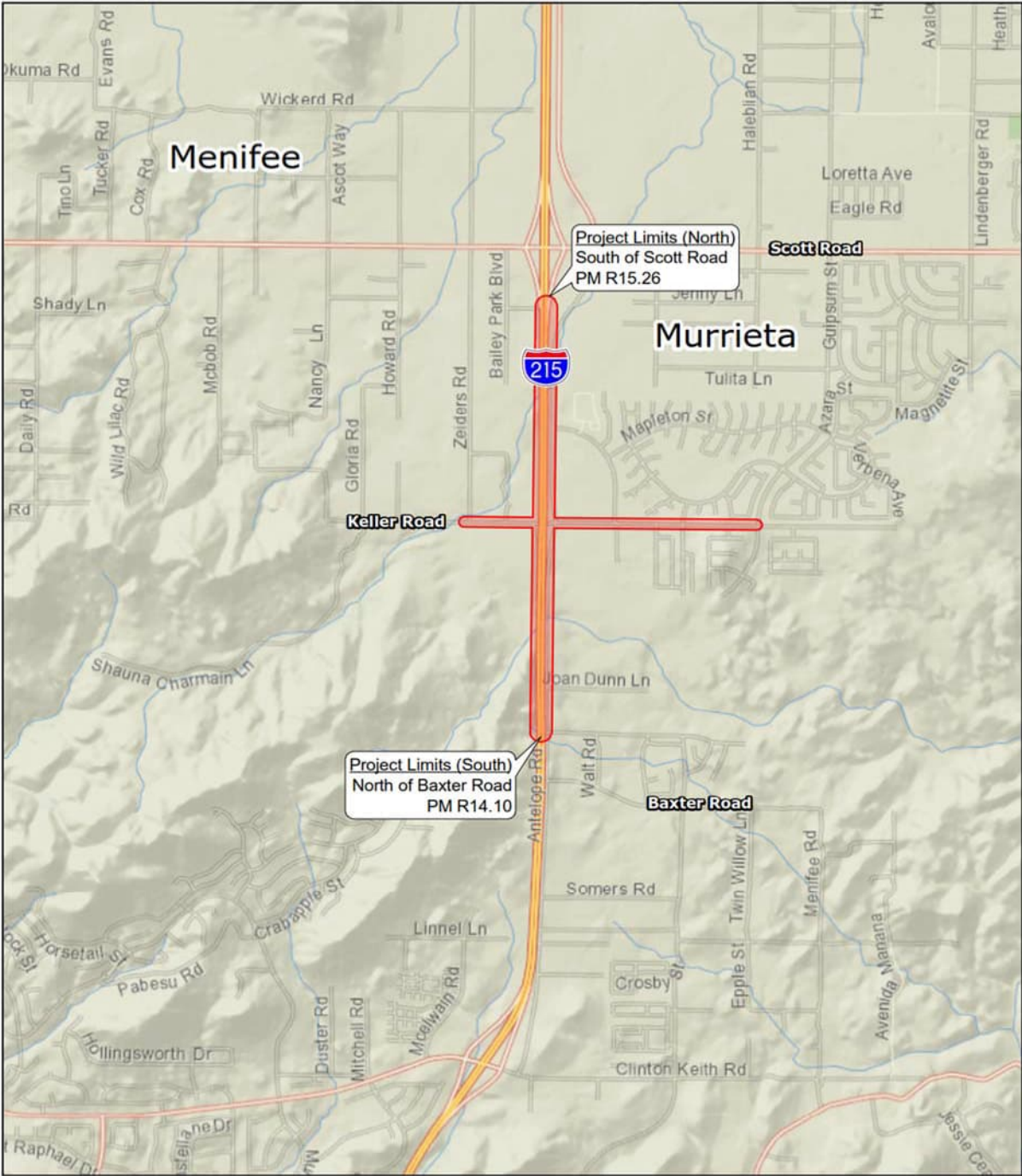
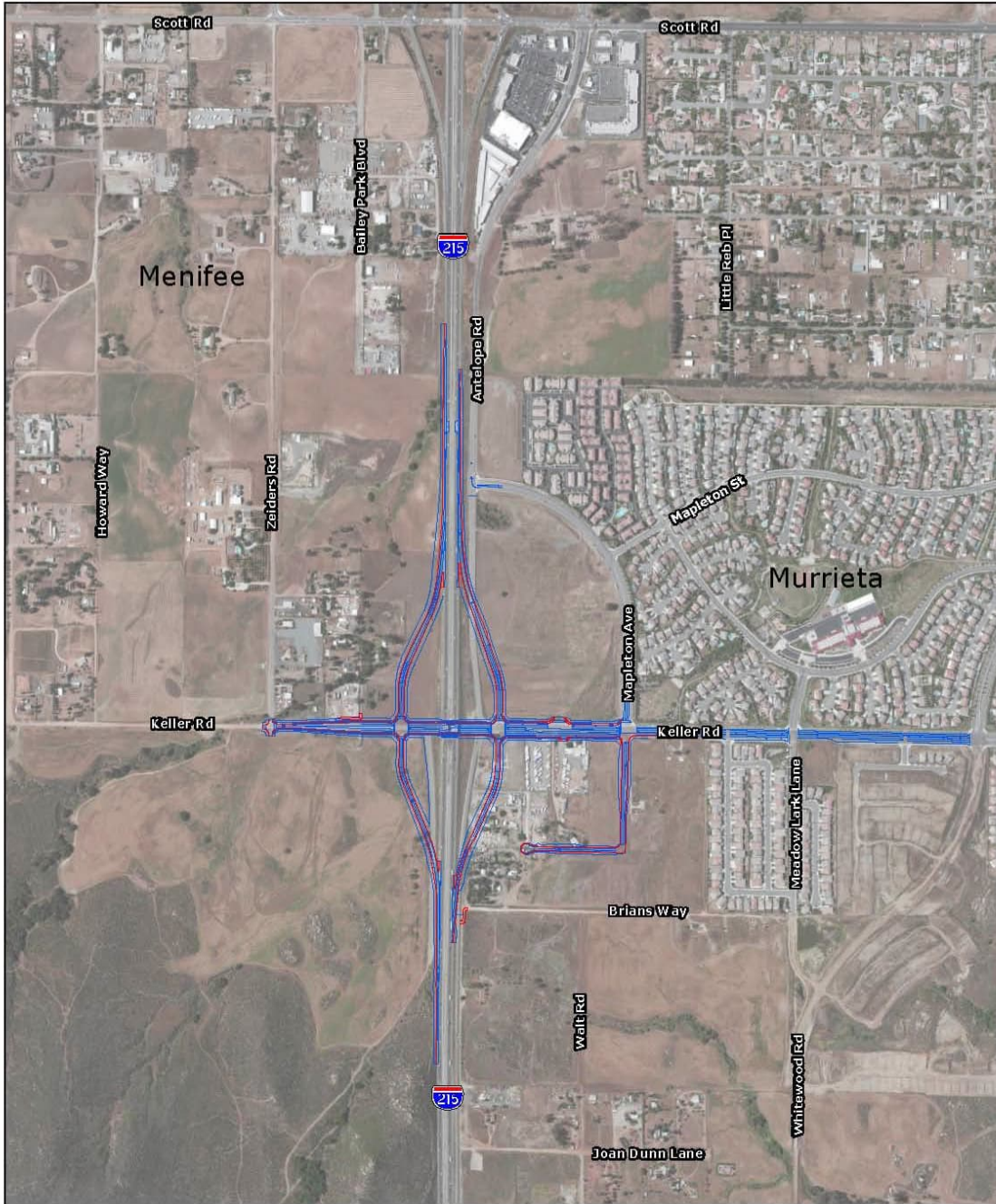
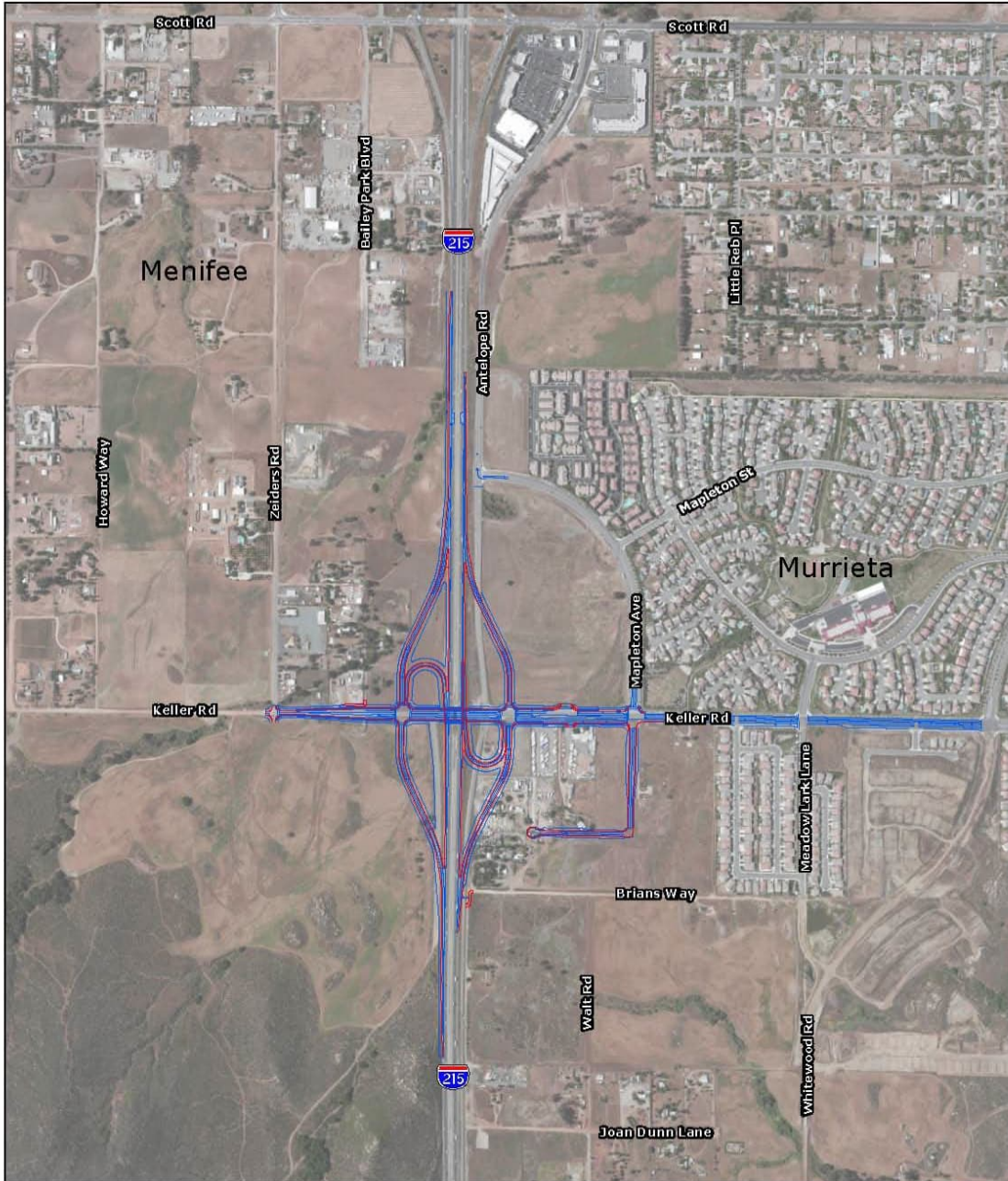


Figure 2: Build Alternative 2



- Alternative 2 - Design
- Alternative 2 - Edge of Pavement

Figure 3: Build Alternative 3



- Alternative 3 - Edge of Pavement
- Alternative 3 - Design

Figure 4: Build Alternative 5



- Alternative 5 - Design
- Alternative 5 - Edge of Pavement